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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-0516

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October 28, 2004

President George W. Bush
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President,

I am writing to forward you the attached letter I received from an organization in my district, the Southeast Asian Community Center (SACC). In their letter, SACC explains their shocked dismay over a recent statement you made on the O'Reilly Factor. In that statement you agreed that the South Vietnamese did not fight for their freedom during the Vietnam War, therefore explaining why the South Vietnamese do not have freedom today.

Like SACC, I am very concerned that as the President of the United States you do not understand the Vietnam War. Hundreds of thousands of South Vietnamese fought alongside Americans for freedom from Communism. Reports indicate that almost 300,000 South Vietnamese died during that war, almost six times as much as the American casualty rate. In addition, over 1 million South Vietnamese were wounded. Agreeing that the South Vietnamese "didn't fight for their freedom," is not only factually inaccurate, it is also incredibly offensive to the 1.2 million Vietnamese Americans who have suffered the effects of a war and lost family members and friends who fought with America.

I agree with my constituents, the Vietnamese American community deserves an immediate clarification and, more importantly, an apology. Mr. President, before you disparage 1.2 million Americans again, you should check the facts.

Sincerely,



ZOE LOFGREN, Member of Congress



SOUTHEAST ASIAN COMMUNITY CENTER

formerly *The Center for Southeast Asian Refugee Resettlement* - Founded in 1975

President George W. Bush
October 20, 2004
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Mr. President, you owe the Vietnamese American community a clear-cut and immediate clarification of your statement. Our Vietnamese American community will keep on fighting tirelessly until our honor is restored.

Sincerely,

Philip Tuong Duy Nguyen
Executive Director
Phone: 415-885-2743 x 107
E-mail: scaccphilip@juno.com

cc:

- Senators Dianne Feinstein, Barbara Boxer, Congresswomen Nancy Pelosi, Barbara Lee, Zoë Lofgren, Congressmen Mike Honda, Tom Lantos
- The Washington Post, The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal, The San Francisco Chronicle, The AsianWeek, The Oakland Tribune, The San Jose Mercury News, the Viet Mercury, The Tuan Bao Thoi Bao, The Calitoday, The Little Saigon Weekly News



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Dear Mr. President:

The Vietnamese American Community across the nation is deeply saddened and offended by your response to Mr. O'Reilly's statement on the Fox's O'Reilly Factor dated September 27, 2004.

A segment of the interview contained your answer related to the South Vietnamese is as follows:

O'REILLY: *The South Vietnamese didn't fight for their freedom, which is why they don't have it today.*

BUSH: *Yes.*

Mr. President, what a shocking statement! This was the hardest direct hit in the face of more than 1.4 million Vietnamese Americans, the 4th largest Asian American group in the US. Mr. President, were you aware of the statistics related to the Vietnam War?, the war defended by the South Vietnamese and supported by the US and many other free countries. 58,000 Americans sacrificed their lives and several hundred thousand were injured in this war. The South Vietnam's casualties are many times higher with almost 300,000 deaths and more than 1 million wounded. In addition, hundreds of thousands of South Vietnamese lost their lives on their way to search for freedom after the fall of Saigon in April 1975. Was it not for freedom that the Americans and the South Vietnamese sacrificed so much? Why were the United States and many other free countries in Vietnam? Was it not to assist the South Vietnamese in their fight for freedom and democracy?

Mr. President, your answer in this interview clearly showed a disregard for the sacrifices of both the American and the Vietnamese people and you have disregarded the many contributions of Vietnamese Americans in the fields of economy, politics, academics, sports, philanthropy, science, and military. Our contribution to this country cannot be overlooked and our long history of fighting for freedom should not be undermined.

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